It's Flower Show Time Once Again!

Proudly spotlighted in Vancouver Island Rock and Alpine Garden Society flower show in Crystal Garden, April 17 and 18, is this album of delicate water colors of Vancouver Island native blooms, some now extinct. Artist was former Sophie Pemberton, daughter of B.C.'s first surveyor-general. Panel displayed by society members Mrs. R. Scott-Moncrieff, left, and Mrs. E. H. W. Elkington illustrates native spirea.

First of Season Will be Held April 17-18

Spring is the time for garden-lovers and the Vancouver Island Rock and Garden Show—one of the first of the season—invariably creates a great deal of interest.

This year it will be held in the Crystal Garden on April 17 and 18.

Formed about 23 years ago by a few rock garden enthusiasts, the society tries to further this type of gardening so well suited to the Island terrain.

The society's spring show is possibly the best of its kind, if not the only one, in North America.

Not long after the First World War, Mr. C. R. Serjeanston brought the first alpine plants in pots for sale in the weekly public market. They immediately attracted attention. Gardeners found them fascinating.

One of the first to be captivated was the late Mr. John Hibberson, who rarely failed to take one or two home. Groups got together to discuss these plants and soon they were visiting each other's gardens.

Eventually they formed a club and the first members were C. R. Scharff, John Hutchison, Norman Rant, Allan B. Morkill, Walter Anderson, John Hibberson and A. P. Stark. It was necessary to limit the membership to 12 as they met in their own homes.

Soon, the all-male rule was relaxed to include Mrs. Hibberson, who was just as keen as her husband. Then other women joined and soon membership became much too large for private meetings.

In 1933 the Alpine Plant Club was reorganized and renamed, but it was not until Feb. 15, 1935, that the first public meeting was held in Hatt's Hall, 1414 Douglas Street. About 60 prospective members were present and the late Mr. Allan B. Morkill was in the chair.

In its early years the society staged several private shows but not until March 24, 1939, was the first public show given in the Crystal Garden. It was a great success, but the shows were not resumed until after the Second World War, and since then they have continued without interruption.

Mrs. Hibberson, widow of the late Mr. J. A. Hibberson, one of the earliest members of the club, pictured in her garden at 853 Byng Street. Mrs. Hibberson herself was the first woman member of the Rock and Alpine Garden Society and still takes a very active interest in activities.

Cmdr. and Mrs. R. S. Martin, who live at 1054 Holmes, are both keen about gardens and will have many entries in the forthcoming show. They are pictured on their patio which is surrounded by rock gardens.

Choosing their best plant specimens to exhibit in the alpine garden club show are Mr. and Mrs. Ted Underhill, in their garden at 1439 Wendy Road.

Little pools nestling in the rocks provide a lovely setting for the rock and alpine plants in the garden at the home of Dr. C. A. Watson, 3460 Bonair Place. An ardent gardener, Dr. Watson will be among the exhibitors in the show.

One and one makes two—in this case a pair of rare dwarf trillium plants—as Dr. Adam Szczawinski, provincial botanist, presents Mrs. J. A. Hibberson, 853 Byng Street, with a plant to match the one her late husband discovered in 1938. The tiny plant, about 1½ inches tall and fully grown, was found last year by Dr. Szczawinski during a field trip on the Island's west coast. It had been sought in vain since Mr. Hibberson first found it. Mrs. Hibberson now has two—hers is part of the original specimen found by her husband. The delicate flower, about the size of a dime across, blooms about two weeks earlier than its big brother, the wild trillium.